



## Race to the Top Round 2: The Rhode Island Proposal

Race to the Top is a \$4.3-billion competitive-grant program designed to encourage and reward states that have demonstrated success in raising student achievement and that have the best plans to accelerate future reforms. In March, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Round 1 funds to only two states, Delaware and Tennessee.

Rhode Island was one of 16 finalists in Round 1, placing 8<sup>th</sup> among the 41 states that applied for funding. Rhode Island will apply for \$75 million in education funding (over 4 years) in its Round 2 application, which is due by June 1.

**In order to be as open and transparent** as possible in developing the Round 2 proposal, Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist and the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) held a series of public meetings with:

- our broadly representative Race to the Top Steering Committee;
  - school-committee chairs, superintendents, and presidents of local teachers' unions;
  - school principals and curriculum directors;
  - school teachers (meeting co-hosted by the two statewide teachers' unions); and
  - community members, at four community forums (scheduled through May 13).
- RIDE has posted working drafts of the Round 2 proposal on the Race to the Top page of the RIDE Web site ([www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov)).
- Our goal is to build on the momentum from Round 1 and win Race to the Top Round 2. To improve our schools and support our educators and students, we will use Race to the Top funds to provide:
- training for educators regarding new world-class standards;
  - training in the use of data to improve instruction;
  - support for a new system that will track education data over multiple years;
  - information for teachers and families on student growth and achievement at the classroom, school, and district levels;
  - data and other support for an educator-evaluation system that we will design in partnership with educators;
  - support toward developing new models of teacher compensation;
  - stronger induction programs for new teachers and school leaders;
  - training in the management of human resources;
  - development of a deeper applicant pool for subjects that are hard to staff;
  - increased supports for principals and teacher leaders; and
  - partnerships with professional organizations that have proven records of success.

**To win Race to the Top Round 2**, we need to continue to build stakeholder support. Here's how you can help:

We want every one of our school districts to sign the "Memorandum of Understanding" and join as participants in Round 2. (Only participating districts receive Race to the Top funds.) We need signatures from each school-committee chair, each superintendent, and the president of each local teachers' union—by May 14. Contact your local education leaders and encourage them to support Race to the Top!

We need strong letters of support from a broad range of stakeholder groups. If you are a member of a group or

organization in any way concerned with improving public education (a parent group, a library group, a community organization), we would welcome a letter of endorsement. Please e-mail [melissa.cabral@ride.ri.gov](mailto:melissa.cabral@ride.ri.gov).

We welcome letters or e-mails of endorsement from individual Rhode Islanders, including parents and students. See the Race to the Top page on the RIDE Web site ([www.ride.ri.gov/commissioner/racetothetop](http://www.ride.ri.gov/commissioner/racetothetop)), "Send RTTT Comments."

Encourage your friends and neighbors to attend one of our community forums on Race to the Top. The schedule is posted on the Race to the Top page on the RIDE Web site.



### For further information, contact:

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